



Essex Association of Local Councils

MINUTES

EALC Executive Meeting Agenda 21st January 2021 at 10 am

A virtual meeting via Zoom

14th January 2021

Members Present

		Cllr D McPherson-Davis	Basildon
Cllr S Gill	Uttlesford	Cllr A Townsend	Uttlesford
Cllr P Davey	Brentwood	Cllr R North	Brentwood
Cllr S Berlyn	Chelmsford		
Cllr J Gili-Ross	Colchester	Cllr R Mannion	Colchester
Ms B Rumsey	Epping	Cllr M Cohen	Rochford
Cllr J Stilts	Maldon		
		Cllr W Stamp	Maldon
Cllr A Acott	Castlepoint	Cllr M Talbot	Tendring

Also, Present:

Charlene Slade
Pearl Willcox
Jane Gardener
Jonathan Owen
Cllr Susan Barker

Chief Executive Officer
Executive County Training Officer
Deputy Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
Chief Executive Officer for NALC
ECC

Agenda

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10:01 am and wished everyone a happy New Year and extended a special welcome to Cllr Wendy Stamp attending in her capacity as joint Vice Chair of the EALC. Peter hoped that everyone and their families are keeping well and healthy.

We are thankful for the vaccinations that have been rolled out across the country and some members have already had their vaccine.

Welcome to Cllr S Barker from ECC with special thanks given for her support to the EALC over the last few months with the emergency funds that the EALC have been administering from central government on behalf of ECC.

Apologises from Kirsty O'Callaghan, Cllr Barker to circulate the report to members after the meeting.

The Chairman explained there will be some movement in the agenda to accommodate the timing of our guest speakers. Jane Gardener will be joining at 11:30 and Jonathan Owen from NALC will be joining us at 11:45am.

Cllr Peter Davey Notified the Executive of changes to the Braintree Association, Cllr Don Smith retired from the role as Councillor, and therefore the Chairman of BALC, thanks for his contribution and work. The Chairman of EALC wrote to all members reaching out to every Town and Parish Council of the Braintree District. A meeting took place on the 7th December with over 22-member councils. Good feedback received from the meeting except members were not aware that there was an existing BALC. Six members are now taking the lead on a working party within the association to get it back up and running correctly. A letter from the Association will be going out to all the PC's & TC's on what the Association will be doing moving forward. They are going to be holding their first meeting in February. The EALC are just helping them to get them started and provide support to get the BALC back up and running. The Braintree District are not currently represented on Executive but hopefully will be soon.

Cllr J Gili-Ross explained during a couple of meetings the EALC are providing help in a supporting role only. The first full meeting of BALC is planned to take place in February.

Encourage all members who have only one member from the district to encourage all members to have two seats.

The Chairman attended the following events or virtual meetings.

26th November 2020 EALC Essex Health and Wellbeing Conference Zoom

27 November 2020 Chief Constable BJ Harrington Teams

1 December 2020	EALC Health Wellbeing Board Zoom
3 December 2020	Safer Essex
3 December 2020	Meeting with Roger Hirst
3 December 2020	Colchester Association Zoom
8 December 2020	NALC National Assembly Zoom
9 December 2020	Braintree Association Zoom
10 December 2020	NALC Finance and Scrutiny Committee Zoom
14 December 2020	EALC Visit to Office in person
21 December 2020	Climate Commission TEAMS
22 December 2020	EHWB Teams
8 th January 2021	Meeting with Rachel Nolan, Deputy Chief Constable TEAMS
11 th January 2021	Climate Commission Meeting TEAMS
14 th January 2021	EALC Personnel Committee
14 th January 2021	EALC Finance Committee
18 th January 2021	Climate Commission Meeting TEAMS
20 th January 2021	Climate Action Committee Meeting TEAMS

Noted.

3. Apologies for Absence (Please email charlene.slade@ealc.gov.uk)

Cllr M Hessing
Ms H Symmons
Cllr R Martin
Cllr J Devlin

Cllr A Hafiz – absent with no apologies.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Executive held on 19th November 2020 (Appendix 1)
Noted. Post the minutes for signing.

5. Personnel – The Personnel Committee update.

- 5.1 Update from the CEO
Mrs Rebecca Sheppard confirmed she wishes to continue her maternity leave until July. Communications officer role, Mr Eli Haines contract will be extended until 31st August, this is because Rebecca Sheppard will still have approved holiday to take at end of her Maternity leave. The job description of the Communications Officer needs to be reviewed as the position has evolved during this time.
- 5.2 Current Payroll at 1st April 2020 to Include NALC Back pay (Appendix 2)

Cllr DMD provided and update with regards to the payroll.
Noted.

- 5.3 Proposed staff payroll budget 1st April 2021 (Showing last year's equivalent costs to show comparisons) (Appendix 3)

6. Finance

- 6.1 Minutes of the Finance Meeting held 5th November (Appendix 4)
Minutes of the Finance Meeting held 14th January 2021
Cllr John Gili Ross is not a member of the Finance Committee & needs to be taken off of Finance Minutes of 05/11/2020.
Noted.
- 6.2 Budget Report at 31st December 2020 – (Appendix 5)
Cllr D McPherson-Davis explained some uncertainty with regards to future forecast.
Explained Year to Date, Forecast, Budget Plan Columns in detail.
Cllr Susan Barker questioned where the business rates were on the spread sheet. Cllr David McPherson-Davis confirmed they come under premises on the spread sheet. Cllr David McPherson-Davis confirmed they were unable to claim any money back for business rates during the pandemic.
- 6.3 Cash Forecast Trading December 2020 (Appendix 6)
Compound trading income for the year to approx. £60 K
Cllr Wendy Stamp suggested to David that the forecasts for the next financial year 2021/2022 could be more owing to Elections happening in May and could therefore bring in a higher volume of income into the Association than what has been forecast. David agreed with Cllr Wendy Stamp.
- 6.4 EALC Reserves Policy Treasurers Comments (Appendix 7)
Checking that the EALC is solvent.
Noted.
- 6.5 CCLA Bank Account Opening – Balance transfer amount to open the account. (CEO to provide an update)
CCLA new bank account is being opened to safe guard food bank/grant money that the Association is currently holding in our other accounts.
Not much movement going in and out of Barclays at present.
Barclays Figure - TBC
Unity Bank Figure – TBC
- 6.6 EALC / EA (2013) Ltd Bank Mandate – Additional Signatories required for Barclays, Unity Current Account, Unity EA (2013) Ltd Account, CCLA Bank Account.
New Authorising signatures in process of being changed.
Joy Darby & Kathryn Richmond mandates have been removed.
Cllr Wendy Stamp & Cllr Stephanes Gill signatures to be added.
Cllr Wendy Stamp & Cllr Stephanie Gill both stated they are happy to be signatories and Charlene to confirm in due course.
- 6.7 Bank Balances at 31st December 2020 (Appendix 8) – CEO to provide current bank balances
Foodbank £59,326.78
Unity Current £78,064.44

- 6.8 Weekly Grant Report to 18th December 2020 (Appendix 9)
Micro Grant left 24,292.39
Micro Grant Summary Ringfenced 19,500.00
Emergency Foodbank funds balance £159.28
Xmas Support Fund - £55,216 end of December 2020
Half Term Fund £60,779 closed in October 2020

Cllr David McPherson Davis said that Charlene and the staff administering the grants need to be applauded for all of their hard work on administering the money. Cllr Wendy Stamp echoed David's praise. Full audit trail on number of Applications being noted on all funds CEO explained the funds and weekly sheet.

Cllr Peter Davey explained there is an audit trail for every single grant that has been awarded.

- 6.9 Affiliation fee update (Appendix 10)
100% membership, in May there was an additional Parish Council formed – Heybridge Basin, electorate had to be recalculated between Heybridge Parish Council and Heybridge Basin.
- 6.10 Financial Regulations Review Track Changes (Appendix 11)
6.11 Financial Regulations Review Clean Version (Appendix 12)

Propose S Berlyn
Seconded DMD

All those present agreed to adopt the financial regulations.

- 6.12 EALC / ECC AGM and Conference 2021 Sponsorship Update (Appendix 13)

Cllr P Davey explained the details of the AGM Event with ECC/PFCC/DEALC conference. This event would not go ahead unless it is cost natural, if covid-19 stops the event this event is covered by the terms and conditions. Deposit is now secured and can be paid to Hylands house.

Currently in negotiation with other sponsors to achieve £9,000 in total as the budget is £8,000 as we want 200 delegates.

- 6.13 Appointment / Tender of Auditor for 2021/2022 Year ending 31st March 2022 update on proposed tender process.

Letter to be drafted and sent out to potential auditors for tender for 2021/2022 financial year. Charlene will then report back to Executive with findings & tenders. Same template will be sent out to each tender.

Cllr John Gili Ross asked Could this be transferred into the Standing Orders of the EALC instead of the Constitution?
Tender will be requested for 3 years.

Beverley Rumsey said looking at the finances to congratulate the staff on the reporting, and feels confident with the reporting.

7. Vice Chairman Report – Cllr John Gili-Ross

Cllr John Gili- Ross: Feedback

23rd to 25th November	Police Fire & Crime National Conference and Workshop Sessions
25th November	Police & Fire Ethics and Integrity meeting
3rd December	Colchester Association Meeting
8th December	RCCE Digital Consultation workshop - Virtual Consulting
9th December	Braintree Association Reformation meeting
10th December	Police Fire & Crime Panel
14th December	Police Data Analytics workshop
15th & 18th December	LHP Tools briefing workshop for Colchester Councillors and Clerks
7th January	Braintree Association follow on session.
14th January	EALC Personnel Committee
14th January	PFCP Budget workshop

Cllr JGR gave an update on the work at parish and town council level. How to deal with the precept going forward is a question raised many times at this time.

Noted.

8. Vice Chairman Report – Cllr Wendy Stamp

Cllr Wendy Stamp: Feedback

Cllr W Stamp gave an update to the members and is fully supportive of the EALC.

Cllr R Mannion commented on the parish council's precept question raised by Cllr J Gili-Ross.

Noted.

9. New Initiatives and Other Matters for Decision

9.1 EALC Standing Orders Clean Version (Appendix 14)

Cllr J Gili-Ross explained the main changes made to the document modernising the format of the standing orders and code of conduct for EALC Executive members, changes are seen on the last page of the standing orders.

Cllr P Davey asked to change the date to January 2021.

Cllr S Gill made a comment on the body of the wording the personnel / finance/ to refer to Subcommittee.

Proposed: Cllr Michael Talbot
Seconded: Cllr Shelia Jackman

All those in favour to adopt the EALC Standing Orders

9.2 EALC Structure and Executive Member Roles (Appendix 15)

Cllr Peter Davey explained this document has been written due to new members asking for the terms of reference for the Executive Committee and for some time this has been talked about and needed to be put in place.

Cllr J Gili-Ross explained that there is nothing more to add to Peters comments.

The document will be updated accordingly.

Cllr S Gill thanked members for this work and this document being put in place as this fully explains what is needed for a new Executive member.

To update - Page 4, paragraph 4, to be amended Clerk to be added.

Proposed: Cllr John Gili-Ross
Seconded: Cllr Stuart Berlyn

All those present agreed to adopt the EALC Structure and Executive member Roles. This document will be sent out to the District Association Chairs.

10. National Matters

10.1 NALC Report – Update CEO Jonathan Owen (TBC) Jonathan Owen joined the meeting at 11:48

Wished Essex members happy New Year and hope everyone is safe and well. Times are difficult for everyone.

Letter written from Chairman Sue Baxter of NALC thanking all of the PC's & TC's for all their hard work during the last year. Overall message is how vital Parish and Town Councils are for their communities and work closely with their residents and how their local communities can recover. For County Associations it's an ideal opportunity to make their mark. Sound partnerships are very important. New National code of Conduct released.

Issue of Elections and Remote Meetings runs out on 7th May and requires a change in primary legislation to continue with these remote meetings, NALC are continuing to lobby government to keep remote meetings going ahead.

Elections are primed to go ahead in May 2021.

Ask ourselves what lessons we can learn from last year; councils are active and ambitious. Challenge for councils to be more ambitious for their communities to engage in discussions on how local areas can recover.

Cllr Barker is lobbying for continuation for remote meetings. Legal office to share. There is a view it is better for the climate to hold remote meetings.

Cllr J Gili-Ross explained certain Districts within Essex are considering to becoming newly parished and asked is there funding available for new parish councils. No grant at the moment from NALC.

City of Chelmsford is looking to parish, link in with Charlene and NALC to look at how to form parish and town councils. Justin Griggs to provide support. EALC to bid for funding to help set up funding.

Action: CS to link in with Justin Griggs for funding and support.

Cllr S Berlyn explained there is a large Governance review for Chelmsford and raised comments on development within the City and boundary's crossing.

Action: Link in with Cllr S Barker and Cllr S Berlyn.

P Willcox explained there is a new course on RCCE village hall planning, Co-option and Mr Gray is providing training on Instagram. Planning briefings are going exceptionally well and are new for April.

Chairman/Councillor/Clerks forums. New courses for delivery of online courses.

Noted.

11. Essex Matters

11.1 Essex County Council Report – Cllr Susan Barker (or her representative).

Chelmsford City is to be consulted on whether to be parished.

3.3-million-pound fund to top up the isolating scheme, zero hours contracts, wellbeing service for those with long covid-19

150K people across Essex needing support with Learning Disabilities and Care navigation.

0% council tax for next year.

Highways team working flat out. Same team that deals with flooding and gritting.

3000 laptops provided to Senior Schools.

400 iPad's provided junior schools.

Each ECC Councillor has been given £2,000 to provide local support.

Distributed 1,119 school vouchers, more coming in February and Easter.

Essential living fund – Southend Council

2021/2021 census – will be done online.

25,000 trees to be planted in Essex by the end of February.

Future of Essex Pensions, scheme holds 8.4 billion, looking at ways of making their portfolio greener and reduce carbon foot print.

Across the county more funding will be coming to Essex to provide support for the families and children. No negative comments received across Essex.

Libraries are having a click and collect service coming soon, additional items can be accessed. Census 2021 online librarians training the help.

Question raised for isolating people who are needing a vaccine.

Cllr S Barker explained that the NHS have the vaccination program and ask people contact the doctor.

Jane Gardner joined the meeting at 11:31 am

Cllr W Stamp asked for the contact for vouchers – Cllr Louise McKinley

11.2 Kirsty O’Callaghan Report provided by Cllr S Barker.

11.3 EALC Health and Wellbeing – Danielle Frost Report (Appendix 16)

Noted.

12. Essex Rural Partnership

12.1 Update by Nick Shuttleworth, Director RCCE

Noted.

13. Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

13.1 Update by Jane Gardiner, Deputy PFCC

Jane Gardner gave an update on the PFCC we have a growing force against previous years when it has been stretched and really conscious of the strain of the residents of Essex, with the pressure that everyone is under.

A difficult few week across the entire emergency system, the social care is under so much pressure across the whole system to make this work and support our residents. Vaccines are an increasing topic for conversation, TCG to look at vaccine programme, will support where we can for the people of Essex.

4E’s Engagement Education, Enforcement is the last resort.

Reassurance, December 4% of engagement lead to enforcement action. 14% in January threefold increase. Action will be taken will required.

Issue of people travelling for exercise, guidance states stay in your local area and the enforcement regulations states something different and is a little unclear.

Partnership working is very important.

Cllr J Gili-Ross asked about the fire service and flooding.

Fire service having been inundated with calls regarding the flooding in Essex.
Utmost to respond to all calls.

Encourage to join Jane on 'Facebook Live' for virtual police public meetings, there are in excess of 1,000 people attending and afterwards views on Facebook are reaching 5,000.

Cllr Wendy Stamp thanked Jane Gardiner for all of the work the Essex Police force are doing,

Link: to send to EALC from Darren.

14. Staff Reports

14.1 Chief Executive Report - Charlene Slade (Appendix 17 to follow)
Noted.

14.2 Executive County Training Officer Report - Pearl Willcox (Appendix 18)
Noted.

14.3 Funding Officer Report - Louise Gambardella (Appendix 19)

Huge amount of work, reporting to the executive.
Noted.

14.4 Parish Council Development Officer Report - Amanda Brown (Appendix 20)

Tremendous support that Amanda has given for the legal responses.
Noted.

14.5 Sage Administrator Report - Lucy Alston-Nogueira (Appendix 21)

Thanks to Lucy for the support and huge amount of data imputing.
Noted.

14.6 Communications Officer Report - Mr Eli Haines (Appendix 22)
See great strides in this area, to look at the interactive website, communication weekly newsletter update, new initiatives working with CEO.

15. Feedback and Next Agenda

15.1 Feedback 15 minutes of open forum for members to raise issues of mutual interest

Cllr Peter Davey thanked all of the Executive Committee for joining the meeting today.

Cllr M Cohen, feedback to look at the acknowledgement email of enquires a quicker response.

Cllr M Talbot explained there is no secretary at the District Association at Tendring, Chairman 2nd representative to be raised, great difficulties at the moment for the Tendring Association.

Cllr J Gili-Ross explained there is a Highways toolkit and training, P Willcox has contacted Sonia to arrange the training.

Beverley Rumsey – Thank you to Charlene, Pearl & the rest of the staff & their hard work.

16. Date of Next Virtual Meetings

18th March 2021

13th May 2021

15th July 2021

9th September 2021

23rd September 2021 – AGM and Annual Conference

18th November 2021

17. Matters for future agenda items

18. Meeting Closed at 12:21 pm